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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Ms. Mary Alice Croston, Director
Maine Commission for Community Service
State Planning Office
187 State Street
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Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Friends:

Thank you for allowing me to participate in the Blaine House Conference on Volunteerism by assisting in the swearing in of Maine newest AmeriCorps members who will be serving for the 2004-2005 program year. I am pleased to part of this important ceremony.

Over 40 years ago, President John Kennedy spoke the following words during his memorable inaugural address: Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country. It was the spark that energized America and gave rise to wonderful programs such as the Peace Corps, VISTA, and AmeriCorps.

The young people standing before us here today are from a new generation, and they will soon be putting these memorable words into action all around our great State. Each one of them has the ability to make a singularly positive impact on the lives of their fellow citizens, and that one act can make a powerful change.

As a strong supporter of the AmeriCorps program in Congress, I know that each one of them will soon experience the rewards of public service through their activities in the program.

I encourage each to continue that service throughout their life, and follow in the footsteps of the veteran volunteers joining us here today.

We are thankful that there are people like our veteran volunteers in every community in Maine, for they are people who understand and accept the challenge to help those in need. Leadership through reaching out and helping others is crucial in building a strong community, and such communities cannot be built without kind and generous people like each of you.

With warmest regards,



Michael H. Michaud
Member of Congress

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